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EU-ILO Project
Towards safe, healthy and declared work in Ukraine

Situational analysis of the State Labour Service (SLS) communication for further development of institutional communication strategy

PART II

Produced by: Change Communications

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Contents of situational analysis

1. Media field analysis
 1. Media analysis
 2. Analysis of social networks
 3. Analysis of web resources of government agencies and NGOs
 4. Search query analysis
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3. SWOT analysis
4. Communication goals and objectives

The basis for developing a communication strategy
next step

The main stakeholders of SLS

1. Employees
2. Employers
3. Students (youth)
4. Trade union associations
5. Employers' associations
6. Expert associations
7. Professional media
8. State authorities and services in the area of employment





Survey on the perception of SLS by different groups of stakeholders



1. The results of in-depth interviews with representatives of groups of employees, employers and student youth

Methodology

Survey method: online or telephone in-depth interviews

Study composition

TA and geography		Center	West	East	South	Total
Business owners or persons in charge of compliance with labour legislation	small (up to 50 employees)	2	2	2	2	8
	medium (50-250 employees)	1	1	1	1	4
	large (250 employees or more)	1	1	1	1	4
Employees	small (up to 50 employees)	1	1	1	1	4
	medium (50-250 employees)	2	2	2	2	8
	large (250 employees or more)	2	2	2	2	8
Students about to enter the labour market as employees or employers		1	1	1	1	4
Total		10	10	10	10	40

- As ideas and awareness of **employees and students** are the same, they make up a common analysis group and referred to in the report as "**employees**"
- Business owners or those responsible for compliance with labour legislation at enterprises are referred to as "**employers**"





Students perception

Key features:



- **do not plan to work** according to the acquired qualification
- have a **negative experience** of undeclared work, but do not give much importance to it
- consider working conditions and **profit more important than the declaration of work**
- official employment is understood as a "white salary", it is believed that **formalization requires a lot of efforts and time**, the benefits are not obvious





Employers and employees perception(1)

Issue	 Employers	 Employees
Awareness	<p>Know about its existence, often have experience of interaction.</p> <p>Better awareness is displayed by representatives of large and/or manufacturing enterprises, where the interaction is associated with inspections of occupational safety and issuing permits</p>	<p>Occasionally heard the name of SLS/ Labour Inspectorate from relatives who had an experience of interaction.</p> <p>There are expectations that such a body should exist and is needed. The trade union is the only clear example of the defender of the employee's rights</p>
Quality of awareness	<p>Awareness depends on the experience of interaction.</p> <p>Most often perceived as a punitive body imposing fines, checking documents, controlling occupational safety.</p> <p>Protection of employee rights is not foregrounded</p>	<p>Perception is formed based on the name: it controls the relationship between the employer and the employee, compliance of working conditions with the legislation</p>

Employers and employees perception (2)

Issue		Employers		Employees
Awareness of functions and methods	<p>The audience perceive the functions of SLS as intersecting/overlapping with those of other authorities (Tax Inspectorate, Pension Fund, Social Insurance Fund)</p>		<p>Spontaneously most often fines, control and protection of employee rights are mentioned. Lack of consultation and dialogue is mentioned</p>	
Perception of functions	<p>The most relevant functions of SLS should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawmaking: experience of interaction with businesses puts them into the position where they can analyze the inconsistency of legislation with the reality and improve it • Consultations: 		<p>At the moment they feel the lack of help and feedback, the speed and quality of response to questions is unsatisfactory</p>	
Perception of methods	<p>At the moment control and fines are more common than warnings, which is considered ineffective: businesses need an opportunity to correct the situation, after all the fine will not benefit the employee or the employer</p>			

Employers and employees perception (3)

Issue	 Employers	 Employees
Strengths	Have to do with employee protection <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Checking occupational safety and working conditions• Covering all aspects of work in one inspection• Control of compliance with statutory regulations	
Weaknesses	Result from dissatisfaction with fin es: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspections are perceived as aiming exclusively at benefitting the state (fines) rather than the employee or employer• Absence/lack of counseling support before inspections• Absence of opportunities to fix the situation	
Improvements needed	They arise from the shortcomings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arranging of consultancy support• Simplification/optimization of reporting• Warning procedure about the shortcomings, as fines are now a more common practice• Shifting the focus of inspections from documents check to communication with employees	

Comparison of functions

According to the audience, the most important functions of SLS should be law-making and advising (equally for the employee and the employer), as well as the control function, which requires a shift of focus and methods of control

#	Functions	Relevance for employers*	Relevance for employees
1	Advising employers	4	3
2	Advising employees	3	4
3	Control over employers	2	4
4	Control regarding persons with disabilities	1	2
5	Proposing amendments to legislation	4	4
6	Market surveillance	2	2

* There are 4 levels of relevance: where 1 - low, 4 - high

Findings regarding the awareness about SLS



- Employers generally understand the functions of SLS but suspect the duplication of functions of the Tax Inspectorate and the Social Insurance Fund



- Representations of SLS or Labour Inspectorate among employees are very superficial, often formed by the name of the institution
 - the concept of "occupational hygiene " is unclear



- Students do not understand the functions and role of SLS, the topic is generally irrelevant to them

Findings regarding the image and reputation



- Employers perceive it as a **punitive body** - it controls and fines. The advisory role is not obvious



- Employees mostly perceive SLS as a **controller of employers** - a defender of the interests of employees in difficult situations



- Students do not have a clear **idea of SLS**, as the topic is not a focus for them



Risk areas in communications

1. Presence of negative situations and processes that give grounds for distrust and form the opinion that the main purpose of inspection is a fine:
 - the enterprise request for consultation is often followed by targeted inspection visit
 - lack of consultations before inspection
 - the inability to correct the error after its detection - only a fine
2. Low awareness of employees about SLS: where to go, what interaction procedures
3. Lack of awareness about and interest to SLS among students



Examples of positive stories to use in communications

1. Inspections, resulting in working conditions improvement
2. Inspections, resulting in declaration of labour relations
3. Inspections, after which the enterprise was given 10 days to rectify the situation, not a fine



2. Results of interviews with partners:

- workers' associations
- employers' associations
- expert associations
- professional media

Methodology

Survey method: online interview

The composition of the study:

30-minute interviews with 22 partners' representatives

1. Ministry of Economic Development
2. State Employment Service
3. Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine
4. Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine
5. Federation of Employers of Ukraine
6. Association of Employers' Organizations of Ukraine
7. Confederation of Employers of Ukraine
8. European Community on Occupational Safety and Health
9. 3 specialized media

How do the partners of SLS perceive it?

- All partners are convinced of the importance of the functions and role of SLS
- Most social partners claim that SLS has a weak position and a lack of resources
- Most partners claim that SLS adheres to too bureaucratic style of communication.
- Representatives of different groups have very different perceptions of SLS and ideas about the role and functions of the organization depending on the cooperation level:
 - representatives of trade unions perceive SLS as a defender of workers' rights, which has insufficient powers
 - representatives of employers' associations perceive SLS as a business controller
 - representatives of expert associations perceive SLS as a service that focuses on combating shadow employment instead of safety and health at work
 - professional media perceive SLS as an authority that defends the law, but does not have enough resources for this

Deficiencies in the work of SLS according to the partners

1. Intimidation of employers
2. Failure to act as an assistant and consultant for employers
3. Legislative explanations are of poor quality
4. Emphasis on punishing white and 'grey employers' for violations, instead of identifying and punishing "black" employers
5. Low level of expertise of inspectors in the field of OSH
6. Opaque accident statistics. Lack of operational analysis
7. Insufficient reliable statistics and qualitative analysis usually given one figure without details
8. There are not enough rights and powers to protect workers' rights
9. The tonality of communication with the social partners is not friendly
10. Lack of communication and avoidance of discussing problematic issues with social partners



3. Interviews with labour inspectors

- 30-minute telephone interviews with 5 inspectors, analysis of job descriptions
- Representatives of the departments of SLS in Kyiv, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Vinnytsia regions and the Eastern Interregional Department were interviewed

How Inspectors see their role in relations with employers

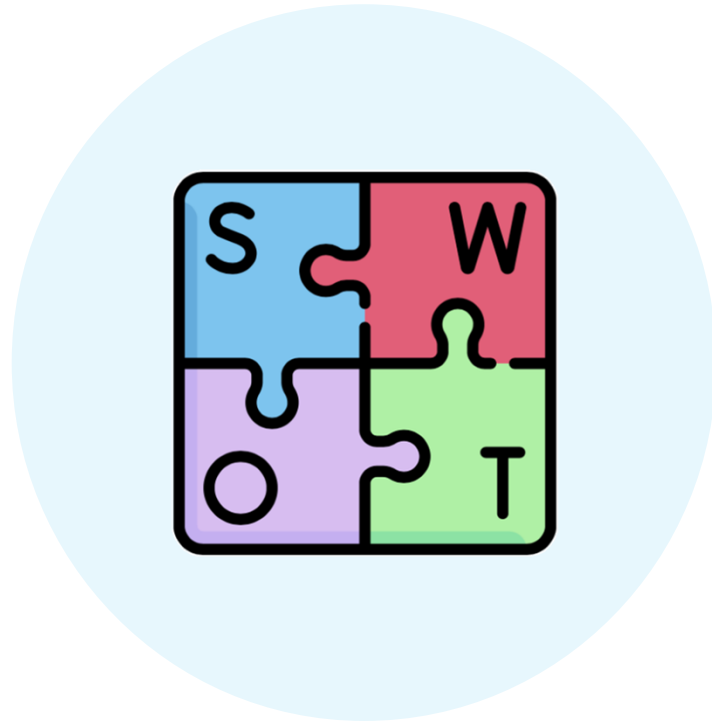
- Consider compliance with the law, not punishment, as their main task
- They claim that they pay attention to informational and explanatory work with employers: holding information seminars, responding to appeals
- They emphasize that they inform the employer how to correct the violations that were noticed during the inspection, even when they do not have a mandate to record them: not for a fine, but for help.
- They emphasize that their inspections always take place on certain grounds - the employee's request, the employer's request.
- Emphasize that any inspection must follow the formal guidance/order, i.e., in accordance with the law
- Emphasize that the inspector is a civil servant and performs his/her duties, so he/she is obliged to take action if a violation is recorded
- Consider resolving conflict situations, establishing contact with the employer and correcting identified violations as a worthy result of their work

How employers perceive inspectors



- Employers who are properly registered are usually friendly to inspectors
- Employers who practice violations are hostile





Summary in SWOT format

Strengths

1. Employees perceive SLS as a defender of their interests
2. The partners are convinced of the importance of the role of SLS
3. Existence of positive stories of changes thanks to the work of SLS
4. Attention to communications from management, the presence of a positive experience of communication campaigns
5. Regional offices are actively involved
6. Query in Google (SLS, labour inspectorate UKR and RU) refer to the official resources of SLS

Weaknesses

1. The general public, including employees and students, does not understand the functions of SLS
2. Employers perceive it as a punitive body - it controls and fines. The advisory role is not obvious
3. Partners perceive as a weak player with limited resources
4. Presence of negative stories of work of SLS inspectors
5. The media field is not controlled by SLS
6. Low activity of speakers from SLS in the info field
7. Low quality content, bureaucratic language, focus on the process and fines in the news

Opportunities

1. The presence of the topic of safe and healthy working conditions in the text of the Association Agreement with the EU
2. Support from international organizations
3. Support from the Ministry of Economic Development, Public Employment Service and social partners, the possibility of using their communication channels
4. Improving staff skills and quality of content through trainings
5. The importance of SLS topics due to the pandemic

Threats

1. General economic decrease in Ukraine
2. Changes in legislation restricting employees' rights
3. Corruption practices
4. Changes in the composition of the top-management of SLS, change in the status of SLS change of the place of SLS in the system of state authorities
5. Lack of experience of positive social models on labour issues in society
6. Lack of funding from international organizations



Communication and management goals arising from the analysis

management goal

Coordination of the desired image, activities and communications

communication goal

1. Formation of a certain image of SLS
2. Raising awareness of all stakeholder about the role and main functions of SLS
3. Formation and control of the media field

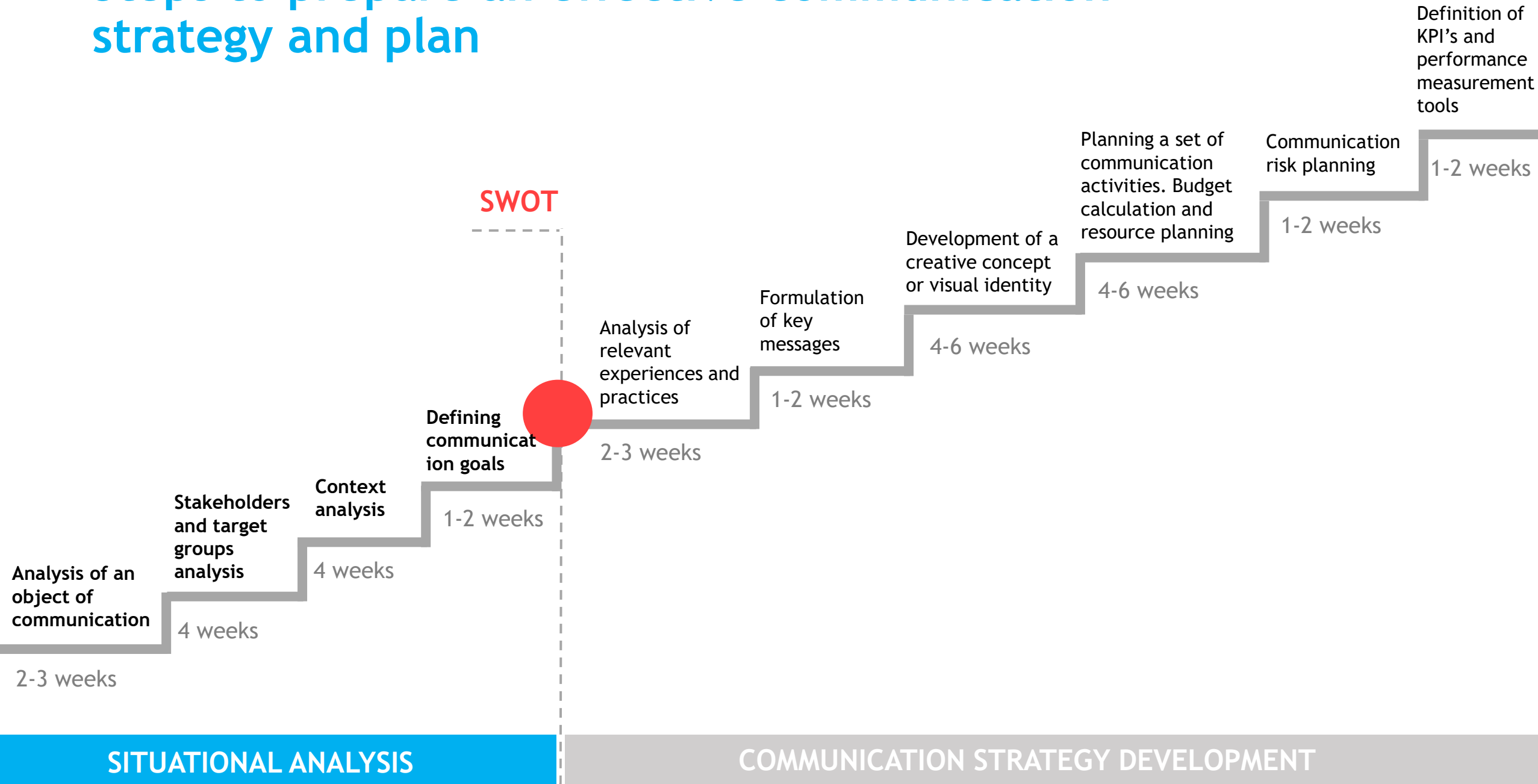
management goal

Strengthening the communication function of SLS

Stakeholders' map



Steps to prepare an effective communication strategy and plan



Next steps

1. Formulation of the desired image of SLS, checking its compliance with the activities of the organization
2. Evaluation of communication resources: people, budgets
3. Development of a communication strategy and a plan for its implementation for 3 years
4. Improving the level of qualification of communicators of SLS



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